Department of Education

NOVA SCOTIA

2000-01 Business Plan

April 6, 2000

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1.0 Planning Context

The Department has six branches: Policy, Program, Acadian and French Language Services, Training and Financial Assistance, Finance, and Facilities Planning and Operations, with a net budget of $874.2 million in 2000-01 and a staff of 420.6 full-time equivalents (FTE). In addition, the budget for Assistance to Universities is $201.2 million for 2000-01, including capital and current year spending. The Minister of Education is also responsible for the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education.

The Department has a broad mandate that includes responsibility for education and training from grade primary through to all post-secondary destinations. These destinations include university, community college, adult education, apprenticeship and other aspects of human resource development. Other responsibilities include libraries and provincial immigration matters.

During 1999-2000 the Culture section, of the then Department of Education and Culture, moved from Department of Education to form a new department with Tourism, the Department of Tourism and Culture. The function relation to marketing educational industries will be transferred to the Department of Economic Development in 2000-01.

The following are the key challenges facing the Department of Education in 2000-01.

- Meeting government's fiscal strategy
- Following through on a wide range of commitments as outlined in the Government's Blue Book and the Speech from the Throne
- Revising the three year school construction plan and implementing the revised plan
- Improving the level of technology to enable access and opportunity across Scotia
- Ensuring access to post-secondary education and training for all Nova Scotians
- Developing the potential of Nova Scotian communities and their people
- Building a strong base for economic growth and diversification through education and training
- Developing a culture of continuous learning

The business plan that follows outlines an action plan to address these key challenges.

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2.0 Mission

The Department's goals, guiding principles, and strategies help develop an environment where education and training are valued, achievement is celebrated, and learners are provided with opportunities and tools for rewarding and successful learning experiences. **Our mission is...**

to provide excellence in education and training for personal fulfilment and for a productive, prosperous society.

Belief statements that underpin this mission statement reflect the Department's commitment to access to lifelong learning opportunities, full participation at all levels of the education and training system for all Nova Scotians, and accountability of all partners.

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3.0 Departmental Goals

The goals providing focus to the actions of the Department of Education in 2000-01 are:

- to provide quality public education and training
- to promote access to post-secondary education
- to use technology as an enabler
- to ensure accountability
- to address diversity through education
- to promote successful career transitions and lifelong learning

The priorities that follow (Section 5.0) support these goals and the Goals of Government:

- Government knows its place (back to basics, restructuring)
- Education as the foundation; lifelong learning
- Accountable and accessible health care
- Creating a strategic environment for economic growth.

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4.0 Core Business Functions

The mandate of the Department of Education spans the public school system, community colleges, apprenticeship system, universities, public libraries, and other programs and services to support lifelong learning. Within this broad mandate, the core business of the Department falls into five main functions.

4.1 Develops, Implements, and Delivers Programs and Services

- coordinates the development and implementation of programs, courses, and educational services for the provincial public school system
- assists in developing and coordinating professional development programs
- provides teacher certification and classification functions and maintains teacher service records
- coordinates the development of specialized educational programming and services to support the Acadian, African–Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq communities
- provides for the delivery of apprenticeship training and journey-person certification in 53 designated trades, and partners with other provinces/territories in the development of apprenticeship training and certification standards
- responsible for the regulation of private career colleges
- provides a range of programs and services for adults, including literacy, academic upgrading, employment programs, and career transition planning
- coordinates library services and promotes library cooperation at national, regional, and provincial levels
- negotiates and administers federal assistance programs provided under Official Languages in Education Program for French first and Second Language initiatives
- develops policy and administers the Canada and Nova Scotia student loan programs
- provides a range of programs, goods and services that ensure that adult Nova Scotians with disabilities can effectively participate and compete in post secondary training with their able bodied peers
- promotes the development and delivery of strategic partnerships to create resources and services for out-of-school youth attempting to secure labour market attachment

4.2 Evaluates Programs and Services

- develops and administers assessments in elementary and junior high schools for program and system evaluation data
- participates with the other Atlantic provinces in developing examinations to monitor student and system performance in math, science, and language arts
- participates in the national School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP), reporting on Nova Scotia results against national standards, and in the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA), reporting on Nova Scotia results in comparison to international standards

- participates with other Atlantic Departments of Education to monitor implementation of the Atlantic Canada curriculum
- provides guidelines for annual school board reporting
- surveys university graduates to determine labour market outcomes and satisfaction, and to assist in the assessment of programs
- partners with all provinces/territories to develop and administer certification examinations that are recognized Canada-wide

4.3 Provides Funding and Financial Services

- provides comptrollership functions and administers provincial grants to school boards, community colleges, universities, community-based learning organizations and public libraries
- provides financial assistance to post-secondary students
- undertakes grant-recipient audits, facilities planning, and equipment acquisition
- provides audit, research, and analysis functions in support of financial planning and decision making
- responsible for all accounting and financial management services
- funds apprenticeship training

4.4 Undertakes Policy, Planning and Research Initiatives

- coordinates the development, communication, and evaluation of policy for all departmental jurisdictions
- coordinates federal–provincial relations in matters relating to the responsibilities of the Department
- responsible for the coordination of provincial immigration matters
- undertakes strategic and business planning for the department
- conducts data collection, reporting and statistical analysis concerning P-12 education matters

4.5 Consults and Provides Support Services

- provides advice to school boards on all matters pertaining to public education and financial management
- advises the provincial government on all matters relating to universities, community colleges and private career colleges
- provides consulting and support services to public libraries
- provides centralized and cost-effective learning resources
- provides cost-effective Wide Area Network (EDnet) communications and services to schools, school boards, and libraries for access to the Internet by students, teachers, and the public
- operates central computer systems for school board administration
- manages the school capital construction program, the emergency capital program, and the school indoor air quality program
- monitors school boards' student transportation systems
- operates the school book bureau

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5.0 Priorities for 2000-01

Goal 1: Providing Quality Public Education and Training

In 2000-01, the Department will continue to support quality education in Nova Scotia through a variety of initiatives.

Curriculum implementation: Consolidate curriculum implementation in the public school system to focus on priority areas, with particular emphasis on literacy, science and math in the English school system and in science, math and French language arts in the French school system

Building new schools and renovating existing facilities: In order to fulfil the Department's mandate of providing adequate and safe schools and equipment, the Department will:

- continue with its commitment to complete 31 new schools, with an additional seventeen schools slated for delivery by 2004
- oversee the addition and alteration program for major renovations to existing school buildings
- work with school boards and other provincial departments to identify and resolve environmental problems in schools

Linkages Private sector partners, school boards and communities

Continuing to improve the learning environment: The Department will continue to improve the environment in which our children learn. In 2000-01, this will include initiatives such as:

- Implementing comprehensive guidance and counselling programs in Acadian schools and continue to support English boards in their implementation
- Supporting initiatives to reduce violence and promote a positive learning environment and lead an initiative to develop a code of conduct for students.
- Implementing a system-wide enrichment initiative to support gifted students and students with special needs, provide professional development for individual program planning at the high school level, and introduce a guide for resource teacher services.
- Continuing to work with school boards and parents to ensure are a continuum of programming choices and services available within the school system to meet the special needs of students.
- Continuing to support the Reading Recovery ™ initiative by training new teacher leaders and assisting boards with training of Reading Recovery ™ teachers.

Promoting innovation at our post-secondary institutions: The quality of teaching at universities is directly affected by the quality of the research infrastructure. The Department of Education is committed to assisting the universities to obtain Canadian Foundation for Innovation grants which will enhance innovation, promote private sector involvement in research and development, and help retain our best university researchers and teachers in Nova Scotia.

Goal 2: Promoting Access to Post-Secondary Education

Maintaining an accessible student loans program: The current financial arrangement for federal and provincial student loan programs will end July 31, 2000. Discussions are underway with financial institutions to ensure continued delivery of the loans program. Arrangements will be in place for the August 1, 2000 processing year.

Promoting trades training to students and employers: The Department will continue to work with the Community College system to improve opportunities for students who wish to bridge from the public school system into trades and skills training. The Nova Scotia Community College has signed agreements with three school boards (Southwest, Chignecto–Central, and Cape Breton–Victoria) to implement pre-college programming tracks starting in Grade 11 within the high school system. Discussions with the remaining boards will continue.

The Department will continue to cooperate with public and private trainers in the development of alternate delivery strategies for apprenticeship training, including Internet delivery and classroom delivery outside of the traditional delivery schedules.

The Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education will continue to advise the Minister on credit transfer and articulation agreements between the universities and community colleges.

A mentorship program will be set up by the Nova Scotia Community College and Rehabilitation Programs and Services to assist students with disabilities who are leaving the public education system to enter NSCC technology programs.

Goal 3: Technology as an Enabler

Technology is an enabler for effective learning and the development of the necessary skills for future learning and entry into the labour market. By creating an environment where learning and technology go hand in hand, Nova Scotians will possess a competitive edge in the labour market.

The Information Economy Initiative (IEI), a major investment in Nova Scotia's schools, universities, and communities, will continue in 2000-01. The IEI has put thousands of new computers and technological links at the fingertips of students, teachers, businesses and community members across Nova Scotia. This investment is designed to stimulate economic development and learning in every corner of the province.

Linkages School boards, technology providers, universities, communities and the Federal Government

The Department is working with the Learning Resource Centres within

the NSCC to develop and implement an assistive/adaptive technology system that will support students with disabilities pursuing skills training.

The Department will provide a specialized career action program for post-secondary students which will mobilize available youth employment strategy resources. Programming will incorporate the use of the Internet for career exploration, on-line resumés and distance interviewing. It will work with students to create dynamic resumés and personal presentations to conduct a successful job search using non-traditional methods of job search, such as cold calls, networking and information interviewing.

Through a partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 114 additional Internet workstations will be available in 56 of Nova Scotia's public libraries and 4 regional training centres will be established in Sydney, Truro, Halifax and Yarmouth. This gift of $855,300 will provide increased technology access for people who would otherwise not have access to computers and the Internet.

The Department will continue to work with the NSCC to make more apprenticeship programs available via the Virtual Campus, a technology developed through partnership with Human Resources Development Canada. New apprenticeship training agreements will be entered into with training providers to ensure quality and accountability measures in the outcomes of apprenticeship training.

The Department is developing an online application for financial assistance for post-secondary students which will improve service to our clients and reduce turnaround time for processing applications.

Goal 4: Accountability

Common assessments for public schools provide an important accountability measure as to how well our system is performing. They give the Department, school boards, teachers, and the general public valuable information about the achievement of students and the effects of a public school education.

The Department is in the developmental stage of a Program of Learning Assessment for Nova Scotia (PLANS), based on the "Principles of Fair Student Assessment." PLANS involves testing in elementary, junior high and senior high school, and regular reporting of results. Assessment development will continue with implementation of Chemistry 12, English 12, and English/Communication 12 beginning in January 2000, and Biology 12 and Physics 12 in January 2001.

The Department will implement a new framework for undertaking new school construction and major school renovations.

In January 2000, a five person Task Force completed a review of school board boundaries with an emphasis on reviewing financial operations, programs and services (e.g., equity and consistent policy development), roles and responsibilities, and Francophone governance. Consultations were held with stakeholders and the general public. In response to concerns raised by the Task Force, a pilot project will be implemented in the Southwest region to establish a new governance model for the public education system.

Goal 5: Addressing Diversity Through Education

The goal of improving race relations and cross-cultural understanding is to value, understand and respect Canada's multi-cultural and multi-racial diversity throughout all areas of the Department's mandate. The Department has been involved and will continue to be involved in initiatives that meet the needs of African-Nova Scotians and Mi'kmaq students. A racial equity policy is being developed for implementation in the next school year.

To further enhance the role of African-Nova Scotians in the public school system, a seat will be designated on each of the regional school boards for African-Nova Scotian representation. It should be noted that Mi'kmaq already have designated seats on school boards.

Advancing Accessibility: Increasing the presence of international students in Nova Scotia classrooms, at both secondary and post-secondary levels, leads to greater appreciation and understanding of other cultures and the internationalization of curricula and programming. A framework will be developed to guide the delivery of English as a Second Language programs in the public school system. The Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education will continue to recommend support for targeted programs at Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University and University College of Cape Breton to assist African Canadian and Mi'kmaq students, and students with physical challenges.

Goal 6: Promoting Successful Career Transitions and Lifelong Learning

Through extensive partnering, the Department is developing a framework to support an adult basic education system which is accessible, affordable and connected. The Adult Basic Education Initiative is exploring the development of a common credential for adult learners seeking high school completion. This proposed credential could ensure portability from one program to another and provide greater access to further educational opportunities and employment.

Work is underway to strengthen the 27 community-based networks that participate in the Nova Scotia Community Learning Initiative. This includes requesting more accountability regarding learner data, program and curriculum standards, and organizational plans. To support community-based and workplace learning, adult education practitioner training is being developed or enhanced, including Tutor and Instructor Training and Certification, Workplace Education Training and Certification, curriculum and outcomes-based workshops as well as other professional development opportunities.

Linkages
Community-Based Literacy Programs, Regional School Boards, NSCC, libraries, business, labour

Literacy is a critical issue in Nova Scotia and efforts are required to raise the literacy rates in all age groups. To strengthen the focus on this important issue, two joint federal/provincial committees have been established. One is focussing on literacy across the life span. The other has been established to examine various issues affecting the Early Years, including literacy in young children.

Planning has begun on establishing a Job Opportunities Bureau, with membership from

Linkages

government, business, labour, universities, community colleges, and the public school system. The mandate of the Bureau will be to ensure the effective communication of future labour market requirements and maintain an interactive web site to make young Nova Scotians aware of the latest training and employment opportunities.	Government, business, labour, universities, community colleges, school boards

Grads@Work has been piloted in three locations. The initiative involves a customized job search program to promote career related work search for new post-secondary graduates.

A joint federal/provincial working group developed a tool to assist career and guidance counselors to support Nova Scotians in their career planning. This tool, Labour Market Information @ Work in Nova Scotia: a Guide for Practitioners, will be released in Spring 2000.

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6.0 Budgeting Context

Current and Capital Expenditures ($'000)	1998-99(a)	1999-00(E)	2000-01
Dept. of Education	$898,330	$873,746	$874,161
Assistance to Universities	188,487	197,232	201,232
TOTAL	**$1,086,817**	**$1,070,978**	**$1,075,393**

The following schedule illustrates the Estimates of the major programs and services of the Department of Education for the 1999-2000 and 2000-01 fiscal years. The majority of the budget comprises grants and assistance to external organizations who deliver educational programs and services throughout Nova Scotia.

Estimates (000's)	1999-2000	2000-01
Grants to School Boards	5,806	597,871
School Capital Construction	24,101	0
School Leases	8,803	30,203
Teachers' Pension Contributions/ERP	77,852	62,205
Assistance to Universities	197,232	201,232
Grants to Community Colleges	55,14	1 57,141
Adult Education, Training and Student Assistance	30,355	25,405
Grants to Regional Libraries	9,613	9,863
APSEA	7,598	7,098
Other Expenditures	54,477	52,682
Amortization - School Capital	0	16,364
Sub-Total	**$1,070,978**	**$1,060,064**
Tangible Capital Assets	0	15,329
Total	**$1,070,978**	**$1,075,393**

As noted above, budgetary targets approved by the Department of Finance provide Education and University Assistance a total combined 2000-01 budget of $1,075.4M, representing an increase of $4.4M from the 1999-2000 budget.

The increase is the net impact of a number of substantial adjustments to the education system and the department's operations as follows:

Increase in P3 lease payments	$21.4 M
Increase in school renovation and construction	7.6
Increase in Information Economy Initiative	2.1
University Assistance	4.0

System Restructuring	5.0
ERP Pension Obligations	(15.6)
Department Operations	(7.5)
Other Educational Programs	(3.5)
Class/School Funding	(4.9)
School Board Administration	(4.2)
Total	$ 4.4 M

The majority of the funding changes occur in the P-12 system. In particular, the net decrease of $4.9M in classroom and school funding reflects significant financial adjustments as follows:

- increased salary and benefit costs re: new collective bargaining agreements - $17.2M;
- increased funding for early literacy initiatives - $2.0M;
- decreased funding re: reductions in school staffing through attrition and a freeze on teacher replacements - ($20.0M).
- general reduction in formula funding - ($3.1M)
- removal of 1999-2000 funding increase for professional development - ($1M)

The government is also committed to quality in the post-secondary education sector. Last year, the government announced a three-year program to phase-in a new funding formula for universities. In 2000-01, an additional $4 million is provided to universities.

Funding is also available to maintain the current level of programs and services in the Nova Scotia Community College network. The Department of Education is adding $2.0 million to the combined $55.1 million budget of the Nova Scotia Community College and Collège de l'Acadie. The current Loan Remission program will be eliminated in the current year. Applicants who had applied for student loans prior to April 1, 2000 will continue to be eligible for the Loan Remission program.

The preceding summarizes the adjustment in funding provided to the Department of Education in 2000-01.

Cost Drivers

There are several key cost drivers that impact the funding requirements of the Department of Education and the ability to meet educational goals and objectives of the Province.

A) Public Education System The P-12 education system consumes the largest portion of the Department's budget. Direct and indirect operating expenditures for public education in 2000-01 account for approximately $747,990,000, or 69.5%, of the total department expenditure budget.

There are four major cost drivers in the public education system: *1) Collective Agreements*

About 85% of school board expenditures are salaries and benefits of teachers and non-teachers. Almost all staff are now unionized. Since amalgamation in 1996, the school boards have been negotiating new agreements to reflect the amalgamated regions.

There is two-tiered bargaining for teachers - the provincial agreement covers salaries and other monetary benefits, and the local agreements encompass local working arrangements.

The provincial agreement provided a 1.0% increase in salaries effective November 1, 1999, and further increases of 1.10% effective August 1, 2000 and 1.80% effective August 1, 2001. The contract expires December 31, 2001. These salary adjustments are estimated to increase school board expenditures by $8.9 million in 2000-01.

Amalgamation of local contracts creates issues of parity. Non-teaching employees are projected to receive salary increases similar to teachers. This will increase salary expenditures by $2.0 million in 2000-01. School boards have completed negotiating local contracts and the impact of wage parity issues is expected to continue throughout the 2000-01 and 2001-02 fiscal years.

Collective bargaining for school board employees has a major impact on expenditures. Contract negotiations for the NSTU provincial contract will not open again until the fall of 2001.

2) Capital

In December 1997, the government announced a major program to upgrade public school infrastructure. In addition to a $90 million capital renovation/alteration program, the government is in the process of building 33 new schools in 2000-01 via public private partnership. The expenditures for these leases will increase each year for the next five years. An additional 17 schools have been announced for delivery between 2001 and 2004.

3) Teachers Pension Contributions

The Department of Education currently provides the matching employer contributions to the Teachers Pension Fund, as well as payments under a ten year agreement to address the unfunded liability of the Pension Fund. There was also an early retirement program for teachers between 1994 and 1998 that required school boards to pay for the additional pension benefit provided to each teacher retiring under the program.

The major cost driver in this area is the early retirement program. In 1998-99, the school boards were given a payment holiday from the Teachers Pension Fund. There was a school board liability of approximately $194 million as at March 31, 1999. At year end March 31, 2000, the Province of Nova Scotia accounted for, but did not fund, the outstanding principal portion of the ERP liability on the year end fiscal results. As a result, the department's budget for 2000-01 contains the interest expense required to maintain the pay down of the outstanding ERP liability. In 2000-01 the interest portion will be approximately $16.4 million. This level of expenditure will continue until the entire liability has been discharged.

4) Programs/Services/Technology The 2000-01 budget of the department reflects a substantial slowdown on new curriculum development and a focus on priority areas. It is anticipated that in future years curriculum development will be more closely linked to ongoing Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation curriculum initiatives.

An increasing number of students with identified special needs have placed substantial pressure on school boards to provide special education programs and services. The special education policy, adopted by the Department of Education in 1996, requires school boards to provide appropriate services to all students of legal school age. Funding for special education has been maintained at 1999-2000 levels in the 2000-01 budget.

In 1999-2000 the government negotiated the Information Economy Initiative (IEI) that will provide a total of $36 million for technology enhancements in school boards over the next three years. The IEI requires an increase of $2.1 million in provincial expenditures in 2000-01.

B) Post-Secondary Education System

The Department provides annual funding to universities, the Nova Scotia Community College and Collège de l'Acadie to offset the costs of providing post-secondary programs and services to students. Many of the cost drivers in the post-secondary system are similar to the public education system in terms of salaries and benefits and the emphasis on improving the quality and availability of programs and services to students.

In the university sector, the government approved the introduction of a new funding formula in 1997-98. The government announced that it would provide an additional $25 million over a three year period to facilitate the introduction of the new funding formula. This year's budget continues that commitment but extends the period to four years from the original three year phase in of the formula. In 2000-01, an additional $4 million is provided and the requirement is identified for a final $4.0 million in 2001-02.

The second area driving costs in the post-secondary sector is the Nova Scotia Community College. Again, costs are driven by salaries and benefits and program modifications. In 2000-01, an additional $2.0 million is provided to the community college system.

The final major cost driver in this area relates to the Student Loan Program. The Department renegotiated an agreement with the Royal Bank to administer the Nova Scotia Student Loan portfolio until July 31, 2000. The risk premium charged by the bank increased from 5% to 10% to recognize the loan default experience over the past several years. A new arrangement for financing student loans must be negotiated for August 1, 2000.

The Department had a Loan Remission Policy that forgave a certain portion of a student's debt load upon successful completion of an academic year. This program had been actively promoted as a means of reducing student debt loads and significantly greater numbers of students were applying for the debt relief program. The current Loan Remission program will be eliminated in 2000-01. Applicants who had applied for student loans prior to April 1, 2000 will continue to be eligible for the Loan Remission program.

A substantive portion of the Department of Education budget is directed to the public education and post-secondary education sectors. The cost drivers related to these areas are influenced significantly by collective bargaining and the government's goal of improving the quality and

availability of educational programs and services to life long learners. Costs are also influenced significantly by public expectations. It is difficult to harness these costs, since the majority of expenditures incurred by educational institutions are for salaries and benefits. There are opportunities to harness these costs through collective bargaining and management of public expectations.

[1] Based on calculating the 2000-01 budget on a basis comparable with the 1999-2000 budget- i.e. a capital expense (non TCA) basis.

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7.0 Communications

Departmental communications will be directed at supporting the department's program and policy agenda, as outlined in this business plan.

Departmental Goals	Key Messages
To provide quality public education and training	We must focus on what's most important to Nova Scotians in education and training - the essentials that children and students of all ages must learn to succeed.
To ensure accountability	Nova Scotians deserve to know how well we're meeting their priorities. We'll monitor and report on our progress and results.
To promote access to post-secondary education	We have a great post-secondary education system in Nova Scotia. We must do everything we can to keep the doors open, so qualified students can take advantage of these opportunities.
To use technology as an enabler	We'll build equity through technology so learners - wherever they live - have access to a world of information.
To address diversification through education	Learners of all cultures and backgrounds must have access to quality education and training.
To develop Nova Scotia's human resource potential	Our people are our greatest hope. Through education and training, Nova Scotians are being prepared for today's jobs, and to help keep the economy growing.

Target Audiences

- School boards and school communities (including teachers, students, parents, school administrators and community members)
- Post-secondary institutions (including students, parents, faculty and administration from universities, community colleges and private career colleges)
- Library boards and patrons
- Literacy groups (workplace, family and adult groups)
- Business, industry and labour

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8.0 Highlights from Human Resources

Mission

Advance the strategic/business objectives of Government and the Department of Education by providing necessary human resource expertise and support to departmental management.

Goals

1. Develop, in partnership with management, a productive, valued employee team focused on accomplishing the strategic/business objectives of Government and the Department of Education.

2. Develop, in partnership with management, an employee team that reflects Nova Scotia's diverse population.

3. Provide management with human resource services which are effective and practical.

Key Human Resource Initiatives

Provincial Teachers Labour Relations - Continued Human Resource leadership in implementing a newly negotiated Teacher's Provincial Collective Agreement will support the Department's goal "to provide quality public education and training."

Linkages Nova Scotia School Boards

Occupational Health and Safety Program - Continued program development and implementation will provide the safe/healthy environment needed for employees to accomplish our business priorities.

Linkages Nova Scotia Departments of Human Resources and Labour

Corporate Human Resource Priorities - Continued collaboration with the Nova Scotia Department of Human Resources in implementing and sustaining corporate human resource priorities will strengthen the capacity of government and this Department to achieve their strategic and business objectives.

Linkages NS Department of Human Resources

Priorities include: providing support for government restructuring, the Integrated

Management Development initiative (focusing on employee performance management, training and development, succession planning, compensation and diversity management), employee attendance/disability management, and NSGEU collective bargaining.

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9.0 Highlights from Information Technology

Key Information Technology Initiatives

- Continue expansion of Education's Wide Area Network (EDnet) to serve more education and cultural sites, and increase capacity for administrative applications, curriculum delivery, Internet access and information distribution. Work will be undertaken in the areas of remote access using virtual private networking technology, web mail for students and teachers across the Province, and student web pages.
- Continue evolution of the School Board Standard Administrative System in the regional school boards.
- Complete the implementation of an on-line catalogue and automated circulation for all permanent and mobile branch library locations.
- Complete the development and implementation of the online Student Assistance application for post-secondary students.
- Continue to develop an Education data warehouse containing a wide variety of education related data.
- Update the Department's desktop productivity suite, in concert with the Government-wide initiative to review current desktop software standards.
- Update the Department's three-year Information Technology Strategic Plan.
- Develop the technology infrastructure and staff expertise needed to implement electronic commerce. Student loan applications and learning resource ordering/tracking have been identified as candidates for the use of this technology.
- Upgrade and reorganize the Department's Trade Mart local area network infrastructure to increase capacity and reflect new space arrangements, respectively.

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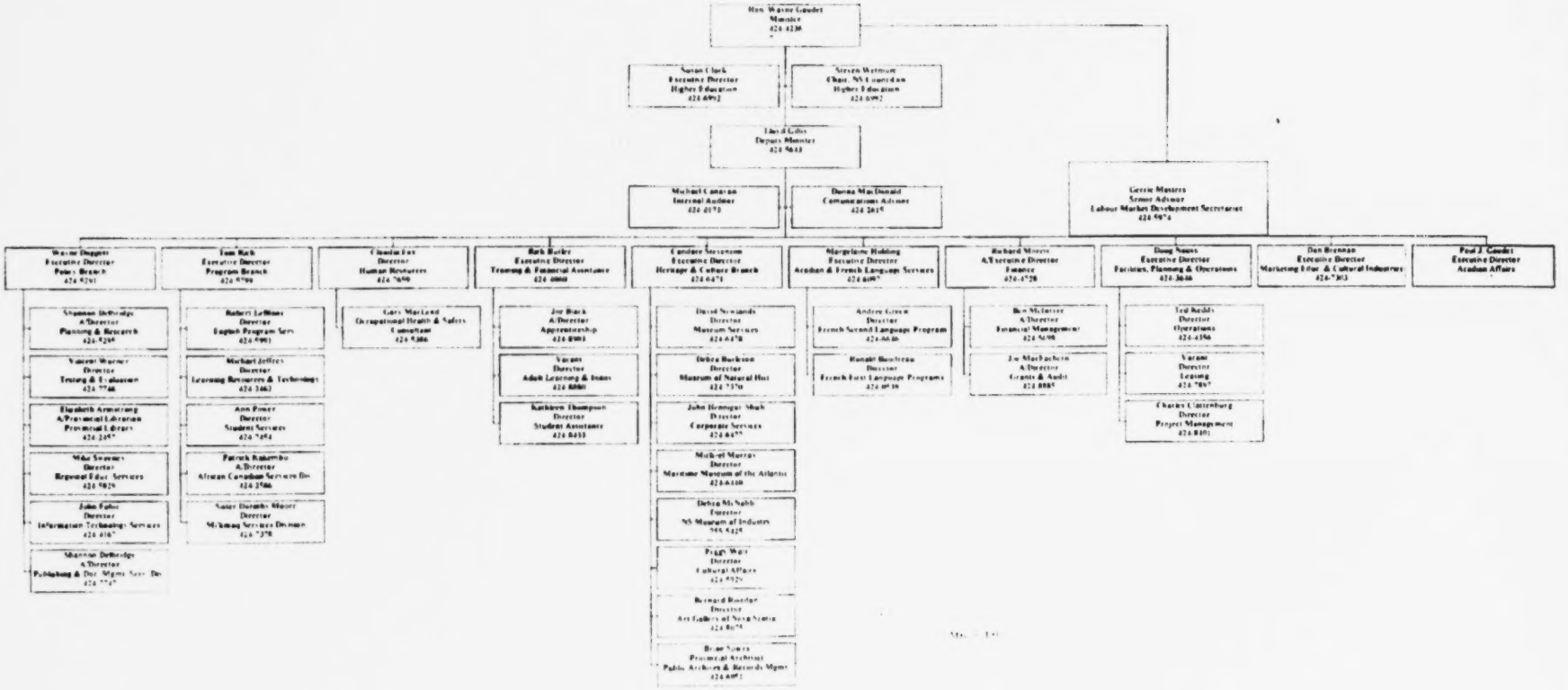

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Appendix B
Outcome Measures

Outcome	Indicator	Measure
Goal 1: Providing quality public education and training		
High achievement and attainment	Student attainment	High School graduation rates
	Student achievement	School Achievement Indicator Program
		Regional Examinations (Language Arts, Physics, Biology, Chemistry and Math)
		Provincial Assessments (Math - grades 5 & 8, Reading and Writing - grades 6 & 9)
		Percentage of schools with operational Individual Program Planning Teams
		Percentage of students at or above their peers' reading level three years after completing Reading Recovery ™
High quality education environment	Class size	Teaching class size average by level: - elementary - junior high - senior high
	Participation rates	Percentage of junior high schools participating in the Junior High School Network to support improvement in programs and services for early adolescents
Relevant and high quality education and training system	Community involvement in decision making	Percent of schools with school advisory councils - under Regional School Boards - under Provincial School Board (CSAP)

		Percent of schools with school improvement plans - under Regional School Boards - under Provincial School Board (CSAP)
		Percent of schools with accountability reports - under Regional School Boards - under Provincial School Board (CSAP)
Outcome	**Indicator**	**Measure**
Goal 2: Promoting access to post-secondary education		
High achievement and attainment	Institutional (research) achievement	Value of research grants awarded by national granting councils[1] to Nova Scotia Universities - share of national
	Labour market experience	Comparison with Atlantic Provinces of success in finding employment in field of interest by university graduates; trend of success in finding employment in field of interest by community college graduates[2]
High quality education environment	Student satisfaction	Comparison with Atlantic Provinces of university graduate satisfaction levels with their learning experience [3]
Improve access to education and training	Debt level of post secondary education graduates	Comparison with Atlantic Canada of graduate debt levels incurred while attending university at time of graduation[4]
Relevant and high quality training system	Private training industry and partners involved in decision making of changes to the Act and Regulations	Schools registered
Outcome	**Indicator**	**Measure**
Goal 3: Technology as an enabler		
Improve access to education and training	Access to programming	Number of public schools offering distance education: - under Regional School Boards - under Provincial Board (CSAP)

		Student to computer ratio[5]
	Student access to the education resources on the Internet	Proportion of students attending schools having Internet connections via EDnet (or other Internet service providers) by grade group (Elementary, Junior High School and Senior High School)
Outcome	**Indicator**	**Measure**
Goal 4: Accountability		
Efficient use of public financial resources	Use of shared resources	Number of public-private school construction partnerships
	Relative student investment	Expenditure per student[6]
Outcome	**Indicator**	**Measure**
Goal 5: Addressing diversity through education		
Staff who understand and reflect cultural diversity	Educator diversity	Percentage of African-Canadian and Mi'kmaq administrators and teachers in the education system
Curriculum which addresses the diverse racial and ethno-cultural needs of Nova Scotians and promotes recognition and valuing of own and others culture and heritage	Integration of race relations and cross-cultural elements in curriculum	Percent of curriculum documents that include race relations and cross-cultural understanding components
More equitable access to full range of educational and training opportunities	Access for African-Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq students	Proportion of African-Nova Scotians and Mi'kmaqs that graduate from public schools
		Number of adult literacy programs developed for the Acadian, ESL, Mi'kmaq and African-Canadian community
		Number of learners
Efficient use of public resources	Marketing effectiveness	Number of international students studying at Nova Scotia universities
		Amount of revenue generated through export of research and training expertise
Outcome	**Indicator**	**Measure**
Goal 6: Promoting successful career transitions and lifelong learning		
Highly qualified workforce	Employability	Percent of schools with school-to-work transition programs
Nova Scotians value, encourage and participate in lifelong learning	Employer involvement in the development of workers	Participation in adult education initiatives
		Participation in workplace education initiatives - individuals

		- businesses
	Adaptive workforce	Participation in the Community Learning Initiative, Correspondence Study, GED and other training offered by the Adult Education section of the Department
		Participation in Career and Transition workshops
		Number of Career and Transition workshops
Nova Scotians value, encourage and participate in lifelong learning	Public use of library materials and services	Participation and usage levels in the public library system[7]

1. Includes Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Natural Sciences and Engineering Council, Canada Council on the Arts, Medical Research Council, National Health Research and Development Program

2. During survey reference weeks only, as reported for graduate class one year after graduation (i.e. 1998 graduates are surveyed in 1999)

3. Data are reported for the graduating class of each particular year based on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being very satisfactory.

4. These average debt levels refer only to those who borrow. Approximately 49% of students graduate debt free

5. Differing ratios for different grade levels.

6. School board expenditures funded by provincial, municipal and school board sources

7. This indicator measures the total circulation, number of library visits, program participation, number of reference questions answered and the in-library use of materials.

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